



The City Of San Diego

Councilmember Jim Madaffer

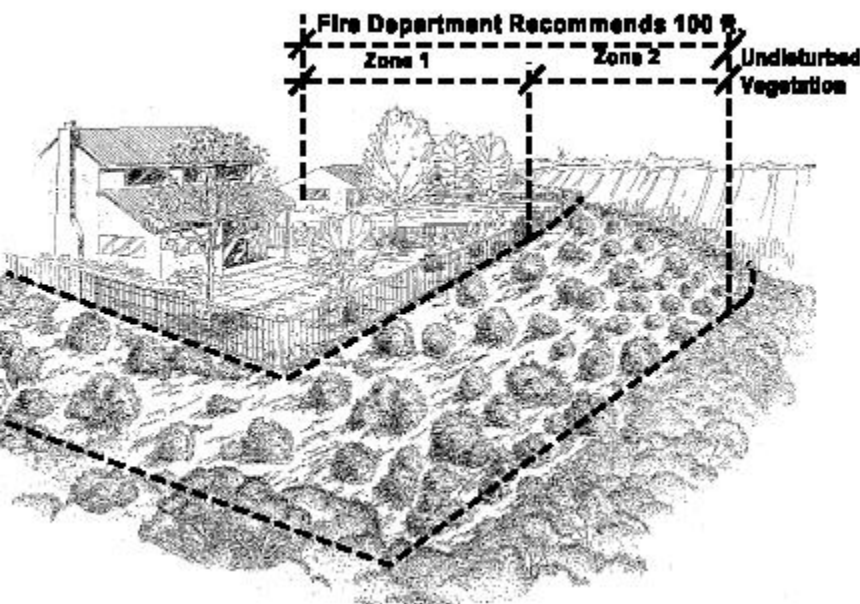
City Council District 7



Lots of items in this issue of my eNewsletter including Brush Management, Pershing fields, College-Rolando Library and more!

Auto burglary spike in Tierrasanta

The San Diego Police Department has reported a spike in auto burglaries in the Tierrasanta area. A reminder to folks to always lock your cars, don't keep valuables inside and to be aware of what is going on in your neighborhood. You can receive free emails of crime in your areas by subscribing to neighborhood eWatch. Another excellent use of technology that I introduced to the City last year, you can visit ewatch.SanDiego.gov and sign up for this free service today. The map shown above is from eWatch and depicts a Tierrasanta neighborhood. The red triangles are auto burglaries over the last 60 days.



Canyon Fire Safety Brush Management

My office has received many calls to my office about brush management since the October wildfires. There are many people who are surprised to hear that they have always been legally allowed to thin the brush on the City-owned Open Space behind their home. They are also surprised to hear that the Fire Department has cited homeowners for not keeping the brush managed on the City-owned Open Space behind their home. This is all about creating a defensible space and I have put together the information you need to make your property fire safe.

Before you go on City property and start cutting down everything that looks like a weed, you need to have a Brush Management Permit from the City's Open Space Division. This does not apply if you are only going to thin the brush on your own private property.

Last year in Tierrasanta approximately 30 permits were issued to do weed control and/or brush management. An additional 12 permits were issued last year for planting slopes to minimize erosion potential or germination of weeds.

Since the Cedar Fire in October 2003, the Tierrasanta Open Space Manager Jan Eby has been swamped with requests for brush thinning permits. Let me summarize the process for obtaining these permits:

1. Contact the Open Space Division at 619-685-1354, and let them know what community you live in.
2. They try to return all calls within two business days.
3. They will arrange to meet you on site where you would like to thin the brush in order to grant the permit.

You should know that Open Space Managers will not give permits for cutting weeds, thinning brush or planting any further than 100 feet from your livable structure (not property fence line). If you feel your particular situation warrants further clearing beyond 100 feet, California law allows the Fire Department to rule on such matters. Contact my office at 619-236-6677 and we will help get you to the appropriate folks in the Fire Department.

Open Space Managers will not authorize the following:

- Permission to trim beyond 100 feet from the structure.
- Permission to plant ice plants. Only native plants may be planted and a list will be provided to the homeowner. (This is something I have asked to change when this item returns to City Council in the spring. It is currently out for environmental review).
- Permission to trim brush for the sole purpose of improving a view-shed.

Generally, turn around for receiving a permit to trim brush on City-owned Open Space is less than two weeks. You must return a signed and dated copy of the permit. The permit states it is not valid for you to enter onto City property unless the permit is signed and dated and returned to the Open Space Manager.

Permits may be renewed with a new expiration date. [For the most up to date Fire Safety and Brush Management Guide, click on this link.](#) Please visit my website at JimMadaffer.com for more information.

Restoring Mission Trails Regional Park



How sad to see the vast acres of burned land at Mission Trails Regional Park. Driving along Highway 52 or Mission Gorge Road you see the sad reminder of last October's devastating fires. Pardee Homes and the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation are helping with the restoration. I commend them for donating \$40,000 to the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation. The donation was made at the January 27, 2004 San Diego City Council meeting. Beth Fischer, Vice President of Community

Development for Pardee Homes said the company recognizes the immense value of our parks and community open space areas and that the contribution will be used to repair fencing, signage and other park facilities. It was a pleasure working with Pardee Homes in making arrangements for the donation. Generous donations such as this will help us complete critical repairs so that the entire park can be reopened in the future. [You can visit the Mission Trails Regional Park website at mtrp.org to learn more about the park.](http://mtrp.org)

Soccer Star Celebrates New Ball Fields

It looked like fun and it was. About two dozen exuberant students and several brave adults joined San Diego Sockers forward Anthony Farace kicked soccer balls on the dirt for the last time at Pershing Middle School. It was all part of a very happy celebration commemorating new ball fields. Mr. Farace, who remembers playing



on the same dirt ball fields when he attended Pershing, joined the all of the Pershing students, principal Sara Sullivan, School Superintendent Alan Bersin, Jan Murphy, wife of Mayor Dick Murphy, and others for the ground breaking ceremony. Soon the school will have nearly five acres of high-tech turf.



I was honored to host this event and it was "deja vu all over again." Four years ago we had a similar event. The state gave us a check for \$350,000 and we thought we were on our way. But the state's check bounced and the project got off track.

However, community

leaders, the school system and I were determined to replace the decades old field with safe, contemporary turf. Dr. Bill Wilson chaired a committee to keep this project moving forward. I committed nearly \$800,000 because I have always advocated making our youth a priority and am working on new joint-use ball fields in District 7.

Understandably, there were lots of cheers and applause when we finally broke ground on February 11th with construction to begin shortly. Once completed, students will be able to play every day for years to come on a safe surface that requires little or no maintenance. A comparable grass field would require 70 inches of rain each year, however, this high-tech turf will save us five million

gallons of water annually. As you can tell, there was much to celebrate that day. A big thank you to Michael and Jennifer Stoff who not only raised money for this project but also catered a wonderful luncheon for everyone.

College-Rolando Library Groundbreaking



At long last, construction has begun for the College-Rolando branch library. Located at the corner of Montezuma Road and Reservoir Drive, the state-of-the-art library will include community meeting rooms, a larger children's collection and special reading areas. It also will have a 65-space parking lot.

The library will be centered around a

strong stone spine which supports reading areas bounded by a serpentine sea-blue glass block wall on the west, and softly curved stucco walls on the east. Another fascinating design for the library is the use of large, north-facing windows allowing significant natural light into the main reading areas while framing high views of the grove.

Designed by McGraw/Baldwin Architects, the \$6.1 million, 15,000-square-foot facility will be more than three times larger than the current College Heights Branch Library that it will replace. The project is scheduled to be completed in late 2005.

I am very proud and extremely excited about the plan for a new library to serve the College Area and Rolando. This is the result of years of community meetings and discussions about the new library, and it is further proof that the city of San Diego is committed to moving forward to improve our library system. I want to thank City of San Diego staff, the College Lutheran Church and the College-Rolando Library Committee chaired by local resident Pat Hannum. Our groundbreaking was the result of years of community meetings and discussions

about the new library and it is further proof that the City of San Diego is committed to moving forward to improve our library system.

The city's \$312.3 million program to build a library system for the 21st century calls for the construction of 13 new libraries and the expansion of 11 existing branches over the next 10 years. Mayor Murphy and I are working together to build a strong, comprehensive library system throughout the city.

In other areas of the district, the San Carlos branch library is currently under design. A second community meeting will be held later in the spring for additional public comment. For the Allied Gardens area, I plan to pursue a new branch library jointly located at Lewis Middle school and in Tierrasanta, our plans call for an expanded library that will be built once we relocate the fire station.

News about the San Diego Chargers



Speaking of sports, the San Diego Chargers is an unresolved issue. Knowing that after 34 meetings or negotiating sessions and the Chargers and the City are still at an impasse, during the holiday season I decided to contact Chargers owner Dean Spanos and see if we could meet. He was open to talking and so, representing no one except myself, we met at his office on four different occasions. It was just the two of us and we had very cordial and casual discussions. There was no agenda. There were no negotiations. I made no commitments. I just wanted to hear first hand from Mr. Spanos why we are where we are and see if there is any way to get the two sides talking again.

I believe we can work something out. I have made it very clear there is no solution if it involves spending anymore taxpayer dollars. I also believe there is a solution to eliminate the ticket guarantee and soon. Unfortunately, the reality of a contentious election season has put our discussions on hold. I thank Mr. Spanos for taking time to meet with me and welcome the opportunity to meet in the near future.

Beautiful Neighborhoods



While the communities of District Seven vary greatly, they all share the desire for beautiful neighborhoods. Smaller details can often have a large impact. When you add them all together, they convey much about a community's sense of pride and cohesion. Over the past four years I have invested time and funds to enhance communities throughout

the district. One of my promises was to enhance the appearance of the communities in my district and I have lived up to that commitment. From new medians, to community entrance signs to planting trees to neighborhood clean up projects - I have organized these efforts and repeatedly hear how much residents appreciate the results.

Occasionally people ask why we invest funds for neighborhood enhancement instead of improving schools or acquiring public safety equipment. What they may not realize is that funds designated for specific community improvements can only be used for that purpose. The San Diego Unified School District is a totally separate governing agency independent of the City of San Diego and funds can not be transferred from one entity to the other. Funds for median projects are enhancement funds and cannot be used to repair roads or sidewalks. Similarly, grants for planting trees can only be used to plant trees. My philosophy is that if grants or funding is available for District 7 that would otherwise be used elsewhere, we should aggressively pursue acquiring those funds or grants. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Stolen Tax Dollars

I also believe that for too long the State of California has stolen funds that rightfully belong to local government. I find it absolutely inexcusable that the State has extracted over \$330,000,000 from the City of San Diego over the past decade. This is money that could have been used for police and fire equipment or street repairs. When you call 911, it's the City police that show up. When you call 911 for a fire or an ambulance, it's the City. When you go to the library or visit

a park, it's the City. Not the State. There is little irony in the fact that the City's pension shortfall is but a third of the money the State has stolen since 1994.

As you may know, the City receives only 17 cents from every dollar you pay in property taxes and the rest goes to Sacramento. The property tax and sales tax our City collects combined doesn't even cover the cost of operating our Fire or Police Departments. It's time we put an end to the State balancing their budgets on the backs of local government.

Undergrounding has Rolando Park Leading the Way

Residential under grounding of utility lines in all City neighborhoods is coming but it will take time. The goal is to have the entire City under grounded within 20 years and finally we're beginning the process on our residential streets. As a result, the City's neighborhood areas have been divided up into small segments. The plan, that Council recently approved and which begins this year, stipulates that one segment from each Council District will be under grounded. The first segment within Council District 7 will be a portion of Rolando Park between University Avenue and the MLK/Highway 94.

This will involve taking down unsightly utility poles and burying the wires under ground. No more ugly poles and wires. It also means some of our older neighborhoods will enjoy an advantage that new neighborhoods have because wiring is under ground. The City of San Diego is coordinating with utility providers such as SBC, SDG&E, Cox Cable and Time Warner. There is no doubt that residents will



have some inconvenience while the conversation takes place but the City will make every effort to keep the impact to a minimum. The under grounding in Rolando Park is expected to begin the later half of 2005. Future neighborhoods in our district will be randomly selected for under-grounding.

A little more background about undergrounding in San Diego

For over 25 years, all property owners in the City of San Diego have been paying, as part of electricity rates, the cost of under grounding utilities. The California Public Utilities Commission or CPUC rules only allow these funds to be used for the under grounding of major thoroughfares (such as Zion, Streamview, Jackson, etc.). Since 1971, twenty-eight underground conversion projects totaling approximately 23 miles of overhead lines have been converted to underground along major thoroughfares in District 7. Most recently, Zion Avenue , portions of El Cajon Boulevard and portions of Montezuma Road were completed. Del Cerro Boulevard and a major portion of Cowles Mountain Boulevard are currently underway. Lakeshore Drive, Princess View Drive and Jackson Drive are being designed for construction and Streamview is nearly complete. However, the problem with this program is that CPUC rules do not permit the under grounding of residential areas.

In 2002, the CPUC approved revised franchise terms between the City of San Diego and SDG&E that would create a program for under grounding lines specifically for residential areas. Under this program, SDG&E franchise fees paid to the City were increased to be 3.53% of SDG&E's gross electric revenue. This increase is passed along by SDG&E to all its electric customers. The CPUC approved this program with the City committing that 100% of these increased franchise fees would be used solely and exclusively for the under grounding of overhead lines. It is a historic program and the only one of its kind in the nation.

The under grounding of overhead lines benefits the entire City and is seen as a benefit to the general public at large. New underground lines increase the reliability and efficiency of the electrical grid as well as help redevelop older communities, which also benefits the general public at large. Under grounding is paid by all electricity users because the entire City benefits by having more neighborhoods that have safer electrical distribution that is more reliable and more esthetically pleasing.

Do You Know About the Paseo?



If you haven't heard about of the Paseo, you soon will. It is a major 250,000 square foot revitalization project located adjacent to San Diego

State University SDSU that will include 461 student housing units, shops, entertainment, plazas and parks on 11 acres. The current concept is anchored by a multiplex movie theater which would serve as SDSU lecture halls on weekday morning. Imagine a transformation on the scale of Horton Plaza! The project will be next to the SDSU trolley stop that is set to begin operating in the summer of 2005 which will help ease traffic concerns. Another very attractive feature is that the entire retail project will be constructed above a 1,950 car underground parking structure that can be accessed from many locations. This project is a great benefit to SDSU and the surrounding neighborhoods as well since it provides more opportunities for students to stay on campus. The Paseo project is one of five City of Villages projects approved by the City Council at the February 10, 2004 meeting.

Free Small Business Seminar

The City of San Diego's Community and Economic Development Department is sponsoring a series of seminars to assist small businesses in San Diego. The seminar will take place on Thursday, March 25 from 3:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. It is led by business experts and the topics are Small Business Staffing Solutions, San Diego Special Business Incentives and San Diego Regional and Metro Loan Programs. It takes place at the South metro Career Center located at 4389 Imperial Avenue. Call 619-685-1390 to RSVP or for more information.

Thanks for being on my email newsletter list. I enjoy writing and putting together my eNewsletters personally so you can hear directly from me. Please [contact me](#) with your thoughts, ideas or concerns. I always welcome hearing from you. Thanks, Jim.

Past issues of our eNewsletter are available

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